

The South Carolina Independent School Association



Montessori Accreditation Packet

3-Year Cycle
Revised June 2020

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INTRODUCTION TO SCISA MONTESSORI ACCREDITATION

All member schools must pass minimum SCISA Montessori accreditation standards within 18 months of being approved for membership by the Board of Directors.

Accreditation requires a one day visit by two (enrollment under 400 students) university instructors, or three (enrollment over 400 students) and one SCISA Headmaster/Representative. You will be asked to choose 3 preference dates for your visit and the exact date will be confirmed with you.

Your team will prepare a packet to be scanned and emailed to the Accreditation Coordinator at least 2 weeks prior to your visit. The consists of the following 4 items:

1. A completed SELF STUDY REPORT covering 12 subjects
(only 11 for Initial Accreditation)
2. The school's LONG-RANGE PLAN (see item L of the Standards)
3. Your school's current ANNUAL REPORT
4. Your school's most current STANDARDIZED TESTS

Complete instructions are included in this packet along with other requirements for a successful visit.

You will be asked to prepare a comfortable meeting room for your visitors and plan to serve lunch. Please have your Board President, Chairman or some other member of your Board to be available during lunch to meet with the team for approximately thirty (30) minutes.

SCISA MONTESSORI ACCREDITATION PREFERENCE DATES

SCISA MONTESSORI ACCREDITATION requires a one day visit by two (enrollment under 400) university instructors, or three (enrollment over 400) university instructors, and one SCISA headmaster. To assist us in preparing for your visit, please list in the **order of preference**, three (3) dates that would be good for your school. As much as possible we will try to schedule the visit on one of your choice dates. Of course, before any plans are finalized, we will confirm everything with you.

The dates of your visit should be normal school days. Check the SCISA MONTESSORI and the SCISA and Athletic calendars to avoid conflicts. Also, do not select dates that could have groups of students or faculty members off campus for field trips, extracurricular activities, etc. Visitors must see teachers teaching during the visit.

After the dates are determined, we will contact a SCISA Headmaster/Representative to be an evaluator on your visit. If there is someone you would prefer that we do NOT ask, please let us know in the space provided below.

School _____ Headmaster _____

Address _____ City _____ Zip code _____

Total enrollment K-5 through last grade served _____

Your school serves grades _____ through _____

Number of full-time teachers _____ Number of part-time teachers _____

YOU MUST BE READY FOR YOUR VISIT ON THE EARLIEST DATE SELECTED.

CHOICE OF DATES IN ORDER OF PREFERENCE

You must include one choice per month between _____ & _____.

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

Is there a headmaster you prefer we NOT ask to be on your visit? Name: _____

You will be required to complete this form and bring it with you to the mandatory meeting prior to your scheduled visit.

Accreditation Materials

Scan & Email to SCISA

1. School Name _____ SELF-STUDY REPORT

Using the SCISA MONTESSORI ACCREDITATION SELF-STUDY QUESTIONS and following the directions to the letter!

2. School Name _____ LONG RANGE PLAN

Using the REQUIREMENTS FOR AN ACCREDITED SCHOOL (Item L) ensuring the document is complete and contains all 6 of the specific points.

3. School Name _____ CURRENT SCISA ANNUAL REPORT

4. School Name _____ STANDARDIZED TESTS

Your school's most current MASTER LIST SUMMARY page for each grade tested. Also provide PSAT scores/documents for students tested in the 10th or 11th grade.

Email each numbered item separately at least

Two (2) weeks before your on-site visit.

Accreditation Materials

Available for visitors on the day of your visit:

1. Blank report cards, blank permanent record cards, blank application forms and contracts, blank testing applications or preliminary application.
2. School brochure or catalog; student handbook, faculty handbook, faculty handbook, and the school or Board policy handbook
3. Copy of the SCISA Montessori Accreditation Standards for an Accredited School revised and adopted March, 2019.
4. Have available one copy of the school's curriculum guides and be able to demonstrate how your school is managing the curriculum.
5. A diagram indicating classroom locations with room numbers and the teacher assigned to that room.
6. A copy of your EAP (Emergency Action Plan).
7. A copy of your current Safety Audit.
8. A copy of your report and checklist from your previous visit (Does not apply to your Initial Accreditation).

These materials must be readily available in the workroom designated to your visiting team members.

MONTESSORI SELF-STUDY QUESTIONS

Organize and type the self-study report using the following format:

1. Make a cover page. Include the school's name and address, headmaster's name, assistant headmaster's and any other administrators name (s), and date of the report.
2. Use a **separate page** to answer each of the numbered questions. First, **restate the questions**, and then follow with the answer. Number each page of the report.

The benefits of the self-study are two-fold:

1. To promote the Board, the Headmaster, and Faculty to enter into a Self-study.
2. To acquaint the Visitation Team with the operations of the school in advance of their visit.

PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING:

1. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE:

- a) What does the school conceive its mission to be? E.g., solely college preparatory? Primarily college preparatory? General?
- b) If the mission includes preparation of non-college students, what special curriculum and career guidance does the school have for those students?
- c) State the Athletic Philosophy. (for athletic member schools)

2. ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION

- a) What is the composition of the Board of Directors?
- b) Is there a clear-cut separation of authority and duties between the Board and the Headmaster?
- c) Does the Headmaster attend all or part of the meetings of the Board?
- d) Is there an Assistant Headmaster? If so, what are his/her duties and responsibilities?

3. EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM (As the answers to this section differ from grade to grade, please indicate which grades to which you are referring)

- a) By whom and through what process is the content of the curriculum chosen? Is this content in writing?
- b) What are the mechanics and philosophy of textbook selection? Do textbooks determine the curriculum?
- c) Are entrance tests required? How are the results used?
- d) If the school has a heterogeneous population, what special provisions are made for the different academic levels and needs of the pupils?

4. FINANCIAL RESOURCES

- a) Is there an external audit of the previous year's operation? Please include it.
- b) Is there a line-item budget for the current year's operation? Please include it.
- c) Is there an adequate bookkeeping system for the posting of all income and expenditures? Briefly describe it.
- d) How is purchasing accomplished? Who signs checks? Is there an internal audit?

5. FACULTY

- a) How are faculty members recruited, interviewed, and hired?
- b) Is there an official transcript, I-9 form (for all employees hired after November 6, 1989), School Employee Evaluation for Tuberculosis, verification of annual Blood-borne Pathogens Training, and EAP Training on file for every faculty member?
- c) Are teaching workloads equitable?

6. LIBRARY

- a) What are the library holdings, including audio-visual equipment? List periodicals and the dates of major reference materials.
- b) Provide documentation of a budget line-item for library acquisitions and audio-visual equipment. (REQUIRED).
- c) Is the librarian trained?
- d) What services does the library offer to the students? To the teachers?

7. STUDENT SERVICES

- a) Are counseling and guidance services offered, particularly for the upper level, college-bound students?
- b) How is discipline maintained?
- c) Are entrance and achievement tests administered? Are the results analyzed?
- d) How are student records maintained?
- e) How are health records maintained?

8. PHYSICAL PLANT

- a) Is there a floor plan available? If so, please include.
- b) Is there a regular maintenance plan?
- c) Is there an annual Safety Audit? (REQUIRED) A copy must be provided for the visiting team on the day of your visit. (REQUIRED)

9. PROJECTIONS

- a) What is the assessment of the school's viability? It's future financial strength? Turnover and retention rates of teachers? Enrollment predictions?
- b) What should be done to strengthen the school's viability.

10. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- a) Describe your procedures for ensuring faculty development for your school.
- b) Complete the attached Professional Development Checklist including both formal and informal professional development.
- c) All teaching faculty must attend the Annual Teachers' Conference within the schools respective 3-5 year accreditation cycle. Proof of attendance is required.

11. SCHOOL CALENDAR

- a) Attach the school calendar for the current year.
- b) Compile the number of gross days represented on the calendar (Item II D).
- c) Define a half day at your school.
- d) List the total number of half days in your school calendar.
- e) For what purposes do you schedule a half school day?

12. INTERNAL REVIEW DIAGNOSTIC

- a) Rank each category of the review based upon the stated required evidences.
- b) Ranking should be based on compliance of stated evidences.
- c) Ranking Qualifications:
 - 4 = 75% compliance of evidence or greater.
 - 3 = 50% to 75% compliance of evidence.
 - 2 = 25% to 50% compliance of evidence.
 - 1 = 0% to 25% compliance of evidence.

13. PREVIOUS VISIT (Does not apply to initial accreditation)

- a) Provide a list of progress made on recommendations and/or deficiencies written by the visitation committee on your last visit.

REQUIREMENTS FOR AN ACCREDITED SCHOOL

I. An accredited independent elementary school must employ qualified (defined II, B) teachers and other necessary staff personnel, maintain a proper pupil-teacher ratio (defined II G), use a course of study appropriate to its pupils, adopt adequate textbooks approved by appropriate personnel or by a committee on standards representing the SCISA MONTESSORI, provide adequate library services and adequate guidance services including annual use of nationally recognized tests to validate local evaluation and to determine proper placement.

II. An accredited independent secondary school must meet the minimum standards set by the SCISA. To be accredited, an independent secondary school must:

A. Employ a school administrator with at least a bachelor's degree who does not teach more than two of the following: Two periods a day or coach two varsity athletic teams, or one of each. An assistant administrator, who teaches less than a full load, is required in schools over 250 enrollment.

B. Employ teachers in grades K5 (hired after January 1994) through 12 whose academic training, experience, or combination of same, fully indicate the professional ability, insight, and enthusiasm necessary to complete classroom assignments satisfactorily. Each teacher in grades K5 through 12 must have a minimum of a state certificate and/or bachelor's degree.

C. Employ a sufficient number of such teachers to sustain a curriculum that shall include one or both of the following:

GENERAL DIPLOMA REQUIREMENTS:

Subject Units

* English:	4
* Mathematics:	3
* Science:	3
* Social Studies (One of these must be a unit in American History):	3
* Physical Education (PE)	1
* Computer Science	1
Electives:	9
* Two units of the same foreign language may be substituted for two of the following three units: One unit of science, one unit of mathematics, or one unit of social studies.	

COLLEGE PREPARATORY DIPLOMA REQUIREMENTS:

Subject Units

English:	4
Mathematics (Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II):	4
Science (Phys. Science, Biology, Chemistry, or Physics, I and/or):	4
Social Studies (American Hist., European Hist., Govt. /Econ. 1/2 each):	3
Foreign Language (Two units of the same language):	2
Physical Education:	1
Computer Science	1
Electives:	8

Appropriate research experiences should be included in the curriculum.

These may apply to one "track" of a high school with more than one curriculum or to a high school as a whole. If only part of the school is meeting these, the administration must be sure the Board, pupils, and parents are aware of which pupils are in which "track," and the school's diploma should indicate the distinction.

A school chartered for diagnosed learning disabilities may receive special consideration in the areas of course requirements and grade level promotion.

Levels in each curriculum as applicable to each individual member school:

FOR ADVANCEMENT TO:	GENERAL DIPLOMA	COLLEGE PREPARATORY
Sophomore (grade 10)	6 units	6 units
Junior (grade 11)	12 units	12 units
Senior (grade 12)	18 units	18 units
Graduation	24 units	24 units

Each member school shall determine eligibility for grade placement according to entrance tests, past records, and the needs of each individual student.

D. Operate the school no fewer than 5 1/2 hours per day for a minimum of 180 school days (gross) per year. This is defined as no less than 175 student school days per session with only three half-day exam days each semester being allowed to count toward the total number of days as a full day. Gross days are defined as student days plus faculty in-service days. One-unit courses meet five days per week for a minimum of 45 minutes each period or the equivalent.

E. Provide an on-campus, centralized (inventoried and controlled) access to sufficient library books, technological and other resources, to supplement and enrich the total school program emphasizing instruction in research skills. Complete library standards are included in accreditation standard packets. Note: Use of off-campus research facilities is encouraged, but this should not take the place of the on-campus facility.

F. Provide adequate guidance services including annual use of nationally recognized achievement tests to validate local evaluation and to determine proper placement. Administer achievement tests to four grades each year and I.Q. tests to at least three grades each year through the SCISA MONTESSORI testing program. In addition, P.S.A.T.'s must be given in the 10th or 11th grade.

G. Realize that though the SCISA MONTESSORI strongly recommends a maximum class size of 25 pupils per class, schools may increase this number to 28 per class. Any increase above 28 requires action of the school's Board of Directors and must be documented and be available to the SCISA upon request.

H. Keep adequate permanent records on teachers and pupils, including current valid transcripts on all teachers and pupils. An official transcript or copy of the official transcript showing the college seal is required on teachers and administrators.

I. Schools must make provisions for annual faculty development.

J. Administrators and/or school representatives must attend at least one headmasters' meeting (November or March) each year, and are encouraged to attend workshops and take graduate courses.

K. Have curriculum guides which provide a detailed description of the curriculum of the school available for inspection by the visiting team.

L. A school must have a LONG RANGE PLAN. The Long Range Plan must include all of the following elements:

1. A three to five year outlook for the school.
2. A statement of the enrollment goals of the school.
3. A statement of the budget and salary goals of the school.
4. A plan and demonstration of consistency between the school's Mission Statement and the Long Range Plan.
5. A plan and demonstration of consistency between the school's Curriculum and the Long Range Plan.
6. Input from the broad school constituency concerning these listed items.

III. A school's physical facilities must meet the applicable federal, state, and local safety, fire, and *health (*definition: including immunizations, School Employee Evaluation For Tuberculosis, and Blood borne Pathogens) regulations. In laboratories these regulations require that the laboratory include eye wash, safety shower, ventilation, gas and water cut-offs located inside the laboratory, two fire extinguishers, and safe storage for flammable substances. The grounds shall provide areas for physical education and recreation and the building shall be maintained to provide a safe, sanitary, and attractive environment for learning.

IV.

A. A school is normally accredited for three years. However, the visiting committee may recommend either of two one year periods of accreditation when it feels the circumstances warrant, including but not limited to, frequent faculty, administration, or trustee turnover and/or a sharp decline in student enrollment.

B. Provisional Accreditation is a one year accreditation of a school that is not currently accredited and meets many of the requirements but needs to improve in certain areas without undue delay. Though this will be most frequently used for schools never before accredited, it may be used for schools which have lost accreditation.

C. Probational Accreditation is a one year extension of a currently held full accreditation when the school does not merit a renewal of accreditation for the full three year term.

D. Effective July 1, 1995, the maximum length of time a school may hold provisional or probational accreditation shall be two years.

E. Each time a school is visited, a \$900 accreditation fee will be required in advance. A fee of \$75 will be required if an additional on-site visit is required for the school to complete the accreditation requirements or to verify that any deficiencies have been satisfied.

F. The accreditation of any school may be temporarily suspended by the Accreditation Committee, after the Committee's review, if it appears that the school may not be meeting all accreditation standards.

G. Initial Accreditation becomes effective at the Board meeting at which it is approved. Basic and Advanced accreditation become effective and expire on July 1.

Last revised and adopted March, 2019

Library Standards

(Please use this copy as a guide for evaluating the library)

The South Carolina Independent School Association Accreditation Standards for Media Centers and Libraries will consist of the three specific categories: On-Site Traditional Library, Off-Site Library, and Virtual Library.

ON-SITE TRADITIONAL LIBRARY REQUIREMENTS:

Facilities

- The library shall be in a designated room(s) on campus.
- The library or combination library-study hall designated room must be equipped with tables, chairs, bookshelves, magazine rack, circulation desk and other equipment commensurate with the size of the school.

Books

- The library shall have a minimum of 2000 usable and acceptable books or an average of 10 books per student, whichever is greater.
- These shall be books exclusive of government documents, multiple texts, and pamphlets.
- The collection should be well-balanced and systematically selected for a wide coverage of subjects.
- The elementary library should not contain more than two-thirds of its titles in fiction, and the high school should not contain more than one-third of its titles in fiction.

Reference Materials

- Each school library shall provide a well-rounded collection of basic reference materials needed to satisfy curricular requirements and stimulate intellectual development of students. Reference materials can be either in hard copy form or in electronic form.

Periodicals

- Each school library shall provide an interesting and useful collection of current periodicals to accommodate needs for current information and appeal to personal interests of students. Periodicals and publications can be either in hard copy form or in electronic form.

Professional Materials

- Each library shall provide a central collection of easily accessible professional materials for teachers to keep abreast of trends, developments, research, and techniques both in general and specialized areas of education. Professional materials can be either in hard copy form or in electronic form.

Newspapers

- Each library shall provide a daily newspaper that provides coverage of local, state, and national news. Daily newspapers can be either in hard copy form or in electronic form.

Technology

- Each library shall provide internet access. It is recommended that all students be exposed to automated library systems.
- Each library must have and maintain a DISCUS subscription.

Librarian

- A school shall have a teacher assigned to the library.
- A secondary school shall have a teacher assigned who has library training through SCISA or through an approved mentor program.

OFF-SITE LIBRARY REQUIREMENTS:

Facilities

- The Off-Site Library must be a “public library” facility that is funded by local, county, or state government.
- The library must be within close or walking proximity of the school.
- The use of an Off-Site Library must be approved in writing by SCISA officials.
- All Off-Site Library usage must be approved in advance of an accreditation visit by SCISA officials.

Books

- Off-Site Libraries must have a minimum of 2000 usable and acceptable books or an average of 10 books per student, whichever is greater.
- Off-Site Libraries must have books exclusive of government documents, multiple texts, and pamphlets.
- Off-Site Libraries must have a collection that is well-balanced and systematically selected for a wide coverage of subjects.
- Off-Site Libraries for the elementary section should not contain more than two-thirds of its titles in fiction, and the high school section should not contain more than one-third of its titles in fiction.

Reference Materials

- Off-Site Libraries shall provide a well-rounded collection of basic reference materials needed to satisfy curricular requirements and stimulate intellectual development of students. Reference materials can be either in hard copy form or in electronic form.

Periodicals

- Off-Site Libraries shall provide an interesting and useful collection of current periodicals to accommodate needs for current information and appeal to personal interests of students. Periodicals and publications can be either in hard copy form or in electronic form.

Professional Materials

- Off-Site Libraries shall provide a central collection of easily accessible professional materials for teachers to keep abreast of trends, developments, research, and techniques both in general and specialized areas of education. Professional materials can be either in hard copy form or in electronic form.

Newspapers

- Off-Site Libraries shall provide a daily newspaper that provides coverage of local, state, and national news. Daily newspapers can be either in hard copy form or in electronic form.

Technology

- Off-Site Libraries shall provide internet access. It is recommended that all students be exposed to automated library systems.
- Off-Site Libraries must have and maintain a DISCUS subscription.

Librarian

- A school shall have a teacher assigned to conduct off-site library academic and instructional responsibilities.
- A secondary school shall have a teacher assigned who has library training through SCISA or through an approved mentor program.

VIRTUAL LIBRARY REQUIREMENTS:

Facilities

- A Virtual Library shall be in a designated room(s) on the school campus.
- The Virtual Library or combination virtual library-study hall designated room must be equipped with tables, chairs, computers, iPads, tablets, or other electronic devices that can be used by students to access electronic reading and library platforms.
- A specifically designated set of electronic devices must be available in the school's virtual library at all times.
- A multitude of charging ports must be in functional and accessible to support the electronic demands of the virtual library.

Reference Materials

- Virtual Libraries shall provide an electron subscription or portal for a well-rounded collection of basic reference materials needed to satisfy curricular requirements and stimulate intellectual development of students. Reference materials can be either in hard copy form or in electronic form.

Periodicals

- Virtual Libraries shall provide an electronic subscription or portal for interesting and useful collection of current periodicals to accommodate needs for current information and appeal to personal interests of students.

Professional Materials

- Virtual Libraries shall provide an electronic subscription or portal for the collection of easily accessible professional materials for teachers to keep abreast of trends, developments, research, and techniques both in general and specialized areas of education.

Newspapers

- Virtual Libraries shall provide an electronic subscription or portal for a daily newspaper that provides coverage of local, state, and national news.

Technology

- Virtual Libraries shall provide both wireless and hard-wired internet access. It is recommended that all students be exposed to automated library systems.
- Virtual Libraries must have and maintain an active DISCUS subscription.

Librarian

- The school shall have a teacher assigned to conduct virtual library academic and instructional responsibilities.
- A secondary school shall have a teacher assigned who has virtual library training through SCISA or through an approved mentor program.

ACCREDITATION TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

BOOKS – The library shall have a minimum of 2000 usable and acceptable books or an average of 10 books per student, whichever is greater. These shall be books exclusive of government documents, multiple texts, and pamphlets. The collection should be well-balanced and systematically selected for a wide coverage of subjects. The elementary library should not contain more than two-thirds of its titles in fiction, and the high school should not contain more than one-third of its titles in fiction.

NOTE: Titles on CD Rom, computer software, or the internet may be substituted for hard bound books.

REFERENCE MATERIALS – Each school library shall provide a well-rounded collection of basic reference materials needed to satisfy curricular requirements and stimulate intellectual development of students. The collection shall include a current encyclopedia set, an unabridged dictionary, a foreign language and geographical dictionary, a thesaurus, a current atlas and almanac, literary criticisms, and biographies.

MAGAZINES – Each school library shall provide an interesting and useful collection of current periodicals to accommodate needs for current information and appeal to personal interests of students.

PROFESSIONAL MATERIALS – Each library shall provide a central collection of easily accessible professional materials for teachers to keep abreast of trends, developments, research, and techniques both in general and specialized areas of education.

NEWSPAPERS – Each library shall provide a daily newspaper that provides coverage of local, state, and national news.

TECHNOLOGY – Each library shall provide internet access. It is recommended that all students be exposed to automated library systems.

LIBRARIAN – A school shall have a teacher assigned to the library. A secondary school shall have a teacher assigned who has library training through SCISA or through an approved mentor program.

FACILITIES – All schools shall provide a separate library or combination library-study hall equipped with tables, chairs, bookshelves, magazine rack, circulation desk and other equipment commensurate with the size of the school.

South Carolina Independent School Association

P.O. Drawer 690, Orangeburg, SC 29116

Dear Accreditation Team Member,

We appreciate your willingness to serve as an evaluator on the accreditation team listed below. Following are suggestions to help make this a productive visit:

1. Plan to arrive at the school by 8:00 a.m.
2. Conduct an interview with the Head upon arrival.
3. Accreditation team members should divide the areas of responsibility of the visit to best serve the school.
4. Review all curriculum guides.
5. Review the Long Range Plan (6 points)
6. Visit every classroom and observe each teacher in a teaching situation.
7. Tour the entire school plant and facility.
8. Review all student and personnel records.
9. Review the school's previous accreditation report (s) to be sure any previously reported deficiencies have been satisfied. DOES NOT APPLY TO INITIAL VISIT>
10. Plan a conference with the board chairman or his/her representative and all team members.
11. Plan to interview a cross-section of students and faculty members.
12. Use the entire school day to conduct the visit.
13. After the school day the team should meet to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the school prior to the exit conference.
14. Conduct an exit conference with the Head to share the team's findings.
15. Evaluation reports should be assigned and returned to the SCISA office by _____.

VISIT TO: _____

ADDRESS: _____

UNIVERSITY TEAM MEMBERS: _____

SCISA MONTESSORI HEADMASTER:

Copy to: Headmaster of the school to be visited.

Accreditation Information

ACCREDITATION CHECKLIST

SCHOOL _____ DATE _____

Please mark one of the boxes under each statement. A mark of unacceptable requires an explanation in the space provided for comments.

1. The school administrator has at least: (a bachelor's degree for basic) and (a master's degree for advanced) and does not teach more than two periods a day or coach two varsity athletic teams, or one of each. An assistant administrator who teaches less than a full load is required in schools with over 250 enrolled.

ACCEPTABLE _____ UNACCEPTABLE _____

Comments: _____

2. The school employs teacher in graded K-5 – 12 whose academic training, experience or combination of same, fully indicate the professional ability, insight, and enthusiasm necessary to complete classroom assignments satisfactorily. Each teacher in grades K-5 – 12 has a minimum of a state certificate and/or a bachelor's degree. A transcript designated by the issuing school as official must be available for each teacher. A student copy or a copy of a copied transcript is not acceptable unless a state certificate is also on file in a fire-proof cabinet. In addition to a transcript, teacher's, administrator's and staff files must include a School Employee Evaluation for Tuberculosis, an I-9 Form for all employees hired after November 6, 1986, and verification of Blood-borne Pathogens Training, and EAP training is required for ALL school employees. (Employee is defined as anyone in direct contact with your students.)

ACCEPTABLE _____ UNACCEPTABLE _____

Comments: _____

3. The school employs a sufficient number of teachers to sustain a general or college preparatory curriculum or both.

ACCEPTABLE _____ UNACCEPTABLE _____

Comments: _____

4. The school follows the recommendations of SCISA that a maximum class size should be 25 students but increases may be up to 28. Any increase above 28 has been approved by the school's Board of Directors and is documented and available to SCISA.

ACCEPTABLE _____ UNACCEPTABLE _____

Comments:

5. The school has a site-specific Emergency Action Plan (EAP)

ACCEPTABLE _____ UNACCEPTABLE _____

Comments:

6. The school maintains a course of study appropriate to its pupils adhering to either general diploma or college preparatory requirements.

ACCEPTABLE _____ UNACCEPTABLE _____

Comments:

7. The school has curriculum guides which provide a detailed description of the curriculum of the school and proof that it is being managed.

ACCEPTABLE _____ UNACCEPTABLE _____

Comments:

8. The school provides an on-campus, centralized (inventoried & controlled) access to sufficient library books, technological and other resources, to supplement and enrich the total school program emphasizing instruction in research skills.

ACCEPTABLE _____ UNACCEPTABLE _____

Comments:

9. The school keeps adequate permanent records on students stored electronically and housed off site, or in a fire-proof cabinet. Student records must include a SC Certificate of Immunization, a current valid transcript, and a SCISAA Parent's Permission form, a SCISAA Medical Form (doctor's certificate), and a signed Warning of Inherent Risk form for athletic members.

ACCEPTABLE _____ UNACCEPTABLE _____

Comments:

10. The school provides adequate guidance service including annual use of nationally recognized achievement tests to validate local evaluation and to determine proper placement. The school administers achievement tests to four grades each year and I.Q. tests to three grades each year through a nationally recognized testing service. In addition, PSATs must be given in the 10th or 11th grade.

ACCEPTABLE _____ UNACCEPTABLE _____

Comments:

11. The school operates no less than five and one-half hours a day for 180 days (gross) per year. This is defined as no less than 175 student school days per session with only three half-day exam days each semester being allowed to count toward the total number of days as a full day. Gross days are defined as student days plus faculty in-service days. One unit courses meet five days per week for a minimum of 45 minutes each period or the equivalent.

ACCEPTABLE _____ UNACCEPTABLE _____

Comments:

12. The school has adequate laboratory facilities to support the curriculum of the school. These regulations require that the lab include eye wash, safety shower, ventilation, gas and water cut-offs located inside the lab, two fire extinguishers, and safe storage for flammable substances. Physical facilities meet the applicable federal, state, and local safety, fire, and health regulations. The grounds provide areas for physical education and recreation and the building is maintained to provide a safe, sanitary, and attractive environment for learning.

ACCEPTABLE _____ UNACCEPTABLE _____

Comments:

13. Administrators and/or school representatives must attend at least one headmasters' meeting (November or March) each year and are encouraged to attend workshops and take graduate courses.

ACCEPTABLE _____ UNACCEPTABLE _____

Comments:

14. Schools make provisions for faculty development either formally or informally.

ACCEPTABLE _____ UNACCEPTABLE _____

Comments:

15. The school has LONG RANGE PLAN which includes each of the following:

- A three to five-year outlook for the school.
- A statement of the enrollment goals of the school.
- A statement of the budget and salary goals of the school.
- A plan and demonstration of consistency between the school's Mission Statement and the Long Range Plan.
- A plan and demonstration of consistency between the school's Curriculum and Long Range Plan.
- Input from the broad school constituency concerning these listed items.

ACCEPTABLE _____ UNACCEPTABLE _____

Comments:

16. There is a clear-cut separation of authority between the Board and the Headmaster. A good working relationship exists between the Board, Headmaster, Faculty, and parents.

ACCEPTABLE _____ UNACCEPTABLE _____

Comments:

17. The school utilizes proper publications to communicate with students, faculty, and parents. (Faculty and Student handbooks)

ACCEPTABLE _____ UNACCEPTABLE _____

Comments:

18. The school has an Athletic Philosophy Statement. (only required for Athletic Members)

ACCEPTABLE _____ UNACCEPTABLE _____

Comments:

19. The school performs an annual Safety Audit. A copy must be made available to the visiting team on the day of the visit.

ACCEPTABLE _____ UNACCEPTABLE _____

Comments:

20. All teaching faculty has attended the SCISA Annual Teachers' Conference within the schools respective 3-5 year accreditation cycle.

ACCEPTABLE _____ UNACCEPTABLE _____

Comments: _____

21. A school representative has attended the mandatory accreditation training within 18 months of the scheduled SCISA visit.

ACCEPTABLE _____ UNACCEPTABLE _____

Comments: _____

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CHECKLIST

Teacher	Position	Professional Development <small>(Show three years)</small>	Attendance at SCISA Teachers' Conference

STUDENT FILE

Name

Form	In File	Verified by	Date
SC Certificate of Immunization			
Valid Transcript			

Comments: _____

STAFF FORM

Name

Form	In File	Verified by	Date
TB Test			
I-9			
Blood-borne Pathogen Training			
EAP Training			
E-Verify			

Comments: _____

FACULTY FORM

Name

Form	In File	Verified by	Date
Transcript and/or State Certificate			
TB Test			
I-9			
Blood-borne Pathogen Training			
EAP Training			
E-Verify			

Comments: _____

STUDENT ATHLETE FILE

Name

Form	In File	Verified by	Date
SC Certificate of Immunization			
Valid Transcript			
Parental Permission			
SCISAA Medical Form			
Warning of Inherent Risk Form			

Comments: _____

COMPLETE FILES CHECKLISTS

STUDENT FILE:

SC Certificate of Immunization
Valid Transcript

STUDENT ATHLETE FILE:

- SC Certificate of Immunization
- Valid Transcript
- Parental Permission Form
- SCISA Athletic Medical Form
- Warning of Inherent Risk Form

FACULTY FILE:

- Bachelor's Degree Transcript and/or
- State Certificate
- TB Test
- I-9 Form and/or E-Verify
- Annual Training: Blood-borne Pathogen & EAP

STAFF FILE:

- TB Test
- I-9 Form and/or E-Verify
- Annual Training: Blood-borne Pathogen & EAP

Accreditation Day Checklist

_____ Work room arranged for your visitors with tables, chairs, drinks and snacks. The team will get right to work at 8:00.

_____ Select a cross section of both students and parents to be interviewed by the team. Informal teacher interviews can take place during classroom visits

_____ The required materials are also located in the work room:

- Blank report cards, blank permanent records, blank formal applications and contracts, blank testing applications or preliminary applications
- School brochure or catalog, student and faculty handbooks and the school or board policy handbook
- Complete current testing results
- One copy of the school's curriculum guides and proof that the curriculum is being managed
- An annotated map of classroom locations, subjects and teachers
- A copy of your Emergency Action Plan (EAP)
- A copy of the SCISA MONTESSORI Accreditation Standards for an Accredited School revised and adopted March, 2019.

_____ Prepare lunch for the visitors including the board members present (at least the Board Chair). This will be a "working lunch"

_____ Team members are at your school to observe teaching and learning. No testing on accreditation days. No out of school or in-school activities besides teaching. No videos, field trips, guest speakers, etc. An annotated schedule for the day. (to be completed the day before the visit)

_____ Provide proof of "other" resources relating to access to books. Nooks, I-pads, Kindles, etc.

For visits other than initial accreditation:

_____ Proof that all deficiencies from your previous visit have been rectified.

_____ Cite actions taken on recommendations/suggestions made by the last



SCISA Montessori Accreditation Internal Review

Diagnostic and Standards

Standards Development

SCISA is committed to the care and education of all students within our association. In that regard, SCISA employs a research and performance-based protocol for all schools that commits to the care, education, learning, growth and development of all students. SCISA holds its accredited schools accountable to high quality educational standards and results supported by an engagement of continuous improvement.

SCISA Standards for Quality Schools

The SCISA Standards for Quality Schools provide the foundation for the SCISA Accreditation Process. The Standards also represent the continued evolution of accreditation as a powerful tool for driving effective practices in support of young children. The SCISA Standards for Quality Schools are comprised of Standards, Indicators and Criteria. The Standards are research-based, comprehensive quality statements that describe conditions that are necessary for schools to achieve organizational effectiveness and ensure student learning and grow. These Standards support an education process that is truly visionary; characterizing how schools should operate to promote a culture of continuous learning that is fluid – engaging leaders, staff and parents. The Indicators are operational definitions or descriptions of exemplary practices and processes, together providing a comprehensive picture of each Standard. The Indicators should be scored individually by school officials through a set of Criteria. These Criteria contain rich, detailed descriptors of what each Indicator looks like in practice. The performance of each school will be rated on each Criteria on a 4 point Likert Scale based on evidence.

Key Educational Concepts in Standards

1. All schools commit to rigor, equity, student engagement and depth and application of knowledge.
2. All schools commit to developmentally appropriate cognitive, emotional, social, creative, and physical growth and development, as well as shared values and beliefs about teaching, learning, development and care for young children.
3. The school improvement plan requires identification of goals for improvement of achievement and instruction.

4. The governing body operates consistent with established roles and responsibilities; must be ethical and free of conflict of interest.
5. Teachers participate in collaborative learning communities.
6. All schools have formal structures whereby each student is well known.
7. Curriculum, instruction and assessment are adjusted in response to data about young children's readiness for the next level.
8. Professional and support staff members are trained in evaluation, interpretation and use of data.
9. Schools must demonstrate, using data, growth in student learning, student readiness for the next level and student success at the next level.

Standards for the Future

Through our own commitment to improvement, SCISA revises its Standards to ensure that they remain relevant and current as the foundation of the SCISA Accreditation Process. There are very practical reasons to review the Standards – our knowledge of effective practices changes, and research reveals new information about factors that contribute to student achievement and the learning, growth and development of all students.

However, revising the Standards also opens the door to considering future trends in education and SCISA's own research and findings from the institution visits at the nearly 65 accredited schools that we have conducted over the last 5 years. Feedback from the field also provided rich experiences and expertise that allowed us to look at creating Standards for the future, not just today.

This rich and deep revision process produced a set of Standards that will challenge schools to commit to the care and educational well-being of students, to reach higher, to examine closer and to demonstrate the fidelity and integrity of best practices in learning. The Standards for Quality Schools significantly increase the focus on teaching and learning; incorporate 21st Century Skills related to student learning; embed high expectations for professional practice; and focus on developmentally appropriate cognitive, emotional, social, creative, and physical growth and development, as well as shared values and beliefs about teaching, learning, development and care for all students.

Each Indicator has descriptive Criteria, and both schools and the visiting External Review Teams will evaluate the institution against each Indicator, not just the Standards.

SCISA Accreditation Protocols:

Performance-Based Models All SCISA Accreditation Protocols are systematic, systemic and sustainable approaches to improving student performance results over time based on meeting Standards, engaging in continuous improvement and implementing quality assurance. Schools may pursue accreditation as individual schools or as part of a system.

SCISA (School) Accreditation is a researched-based framework that supports the process of accreditation; provides a means to engage in continuous improvement; and involves the entire school community in a continuous process of self-evaluation, reflection and improvement. The process invites external scrutiny and welcomes the constructive feedback of peers. The process demands rigor, is based in data and approaches documentation of results with educational best practices.

SCISA Accreditation is a powerful systems approach to improving learning, growth and development of students as well as organizational effectiveness overtime. SCISA Accreditation recognizes that supporting students in their learning, growth and development is a result of how well all the parts of the education system—the school or corporation system, school and the learning environments —work together to meet the needs of students. SCISA Accreditation is used by school from across South Carolina and Georgia.

SCISA Standards for Quality Montessori Schools

Standard 1: Philosophy, Mission, and Vision

The quality Montessori school's mission and vision are student-centered and guided by Montessori philosophy. The school establishes and communicates a shared philosophy that informs all facets of the school's culture, daily operations, and instructional decisions

Standard 2: Governance, Leadership, and Continuous Improvement (Strategic Plan)

The quality Montessori school promotes student learning and school effectiveness through strong governance and leadership that are aligned with the school's mission and vision. It establishes, implements, monitors, and refines a strategic planning process to demonstrate continuous improvement.

Standard 3: Teaching and Learning (Educational Nature)

A quality Montessori school implements a Montessori curriculum based on clear and measurable learner outcomes. Students actively engage in the learning process, exhibit joy in learning, and apply their knowledge and skills to real-world situations.

Standard 4: Documenting and Using Results (Learner Outcomes)

The quality Montessori school enacts an ongoing assessment system that monitors and documents learner outcomes and uses these results to improve educational effectiveness.

Standard 5: Personnel

The quality Montessori school has policies and practices in place to ensure that employees are well qualified and are assigned professional responsibilities based on their qualifications (i.e., professional preparation, ability, knowledge, and experience). Employees are provided support through ongoing evaluation and professional development and are sufficient in number to support the school's mission and vision. The school states and follows fair, ethical, and non-discriminatory employment practices.

Standard 6: Facility Resources

The quality Montessori school provides facilities, sites, and equipment that meet optimum health and safety standards conducive to a safe learning environment in alignment with the mission of the school.

Standard 7: Finances and Stability

The quality Montessori school maintains strong and prudent financial management practices and adequate fiscal resources to support its mission and vision.

Standard 8: Records, Resources, and Support Systems

The quality Montessori school has appropriate documentation, training, and human resources to meet applicable federal, state, and local regulations, assure health and safety of faculty/staff and students, and enable all students to achieve expectations for student learning.

Standard 9: Stakeholder Communication and Relationships

The quality Montessori school fosters effective communications and relationships with and among its stakeholders.

INTERNAL REVIEW DIAGNOSTIC

- a) Rank each category of the review based upon the stated required evidences.
- b) Ranking should be based on compliance of stated evidences.
- c) Ranking Qualifications:
 - 4 = 75% compliance of evidence or greater.
 - 3 = 50% to 75% compliance of evidence.
 - 2 = 25% to 50% compliance of evidence.
 - 1 = 0% to 25% compliance of evidence.

STANDARD 1: PHILOSOPHY, MISSION, AND VISION

The quality Montessori school's mission and vision are student-centered and guided by Montessori philosophy. The school establishes and communicates a shared philosophy that informs all facets of the school's culture, daily operations, and instructional decisions.

Indicators 1.1 – 1.6 / Criteria: The quality of Montessori School:

Indicator Number	Indicator	Review Ranking
1.1	Creates written mission and vision statements with input from stakeholder groups.	
1.2	Publishes a written non-discrimination policy that addresses race, color, religion, sex (including gender identity, sexual orientation, and pregnancy), national origin, age (40 or older), socio-economic level, physical ability or genetic information, and learning style.	

1.3	Develops and updates a demographic profile of the school, its students and faculty/staff, and the community.	
1.4	Communicates the mission and vision to build stakeholder understanding and support.	
1.5	Reviews the school’s mission and vision annually to ensure alignment with its educational goals and philosophy.	
1.6	Has created and continues to foster a program, culture, and inclusive community of students, families, faculty and staff, and governing body (if applicable), that embraces diverse perspectives, cultures, backgrounds, and identities.	

STANDARD 2: GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP, AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT — Strategic Plan:

The quality Montessori school promotes student learning and school effectiveness through strong governance and leadership that is aligned with the school’s mission and vision. It establishes, implements, monitors, and refines a strategic planning process to demonstrate continuous improvement.

Indicators 2.1 – 2.6 / Governance Criteria: The governing body:

Indicator Number	Indicator	Review Ranking
2.1	Establishes written policies and procedures that provide for the operation of the school and for the short- and long-term sustainability of the governing body and school leadership.	
2.2	Functions as the strategic, policy-setting body and delegates responsibility to the head of school/principal/executive director (“administrative leader”) for implementation of the strategic plan and all school operations.	
2.3	Provides support to and evaluation of the administrative leader.	
2.4	Provides an organizational chart that clearly defines roles, lines of authority, relationships, and accountability.	
2.5	Is knowledgeable of and complies with applicable federal, state, and local laws, standards, and regulations. (If the school is exempt from licensing or compliance, written documentation verifying the exemption is required to be kept on school grounds.)	
2.6	Adheres to all applicable laws and regulations related to the education of students with disabilities.	

Indicators 2.7 – 2.12 / Leadership Criteria: The administrative leader:

Indicator Number	Indicator	Review Ranking
2.7	Promotes a culture of participation, responsibility, and ownership.	
2.8	Provides opportunities for collaboration among stakeholders to make the school's mission and vision a reality.	
2.9	Seeks and responds to school community concerns in order to clarify expectations and to strengthen stakeholder commitment.	
2.10	Institutes, publishes, and facilitates systems that promote consistency and continuity of the curriculum within and across program levels.	
2.11	Employs a system that analyzes learner outcomes and school effectiveness.	
2.12	Ensures oversight of curricular and extracurricular activities that are sponsored/offered by the school.	

Continuous Improvement – Strategic Plan

Indicators 2.13 – 2.18 / Criteria: The governing body together with school leadership:

Indicator Number	Indicator	Review Ranking
2.13	Ensures that plans for continuous improvement are aligned.	
2.14	Engages stakeholder groups in a continuous process of improvement that results in a written multi-year strategic plan.	
2.15	Includes in its strategic plan the following: goal statements, person(s)/role(s) responsible for achieving the goal and/or assessing work toward the goal, and financial implications.	
2.16	Uses its strategic plan to guide its work.	
2.17	Annually monitors, evaluates, and updates in writing the progress made toward the goals outlined in the strategic plan.	

2.18	Annually communicates the progress and results of improvement efforts to stakeholders.	
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STANDARD 3: TEACHING AND LEARNING — Educational Nature

A quality Montessori school implements a Montessori curriculum based on clear and measurable learner outcomes. Students actively engage in the learning process, exhibit joy in learning, and apply their knowledge and skills to real-world situations.

Indicators 3.1 – 3.1.5 / Criteria: Montessori Learning Environment

Indicator Number	Indicator	Review Ranking
3.1	The quality Montessori environment:	
3.1.1	Includes programmatically appropriate furnishings (tables, chairs, etc.) of appropriate size and quantity.	
3.1.2	Is clean and orderly to promote student independence.	
3.1.3	Has accessible storage area(s) for students’ belongings.	
3.1.4	Has a water source available as needed for independent student work.	
3.1.5	Allows for a variety of activities such as individual/group, floor/table, noisy/quiet, and active/sedentary.	

Indicators 3.2 – 3.2.4 / Criteria: Montessori Learning Environment

Indicator Number	Indicator	Review Ranking
3.2	Instructional Materials	
3.2.1	Classroom environments are equipped with the fundamental Montessori materials. Curriculum support materials that meet the needs of the student may be incorporated into the classroom, provided that they do not replace the primary use of the Montessori materials.	

3.2.2	Classroom materials are aesthetically displayed and appropriately accessible to students.	
3.2.3	Classroom materials are purposefully sequenced (generally left-to-right, top-to-bottom) according to the school's scope and sequence.	
3.2.4	Schools inspect and evaluate materials regularly for completeness and good working condition and keep a school-wide inventory of all instructional materials and furnishings, including a repair and replacement plan.	

Indicators 3.3 – 3.4 / Criteria: Montessori Learning Relationships:

Indicator Number	Indicator	Review Ranking
3.3	The school structures classes with Montessori multi-age groupings.* Program levels must be structured and staffed for the following multi-age groupings: <input type="checkbox"/> Infant: within the range of birth – 18 months <input type="checkbox"/> Toddler: within the range of 15 – 36 months <input type="checkbox"/> Early Childhood: a 3-year age group within the range of 2.5 years – 6 years <input type="checkbox"/> Lower Elementary: 6 years – 9 years <input type="checkbox"/> Upper Elementary: 9 years – 12 years <input type="checkbox"/> or Elementary I – II: ages 6 years to 12 years <input type="checkbox"/> Secondary: the school must offer an age grouping of either 12 – 14, 14 – 16, 16 – 18 years of age or 12 – 15, 15 – 18 years of age.	
3.4	School administrators and educators shall ensure that students with disabilities are educated with their non-disabled peers to the greatest extent appropriate, utilizing push-in supports and programs wherever appropriate. Students with disabilities shall be removed from the regular classroom setting for the provision of instruction and/or services only when necessary and individually appropriate.	

Indicators 3.5 – 3.5.4 / Criteria: Montessori Learning Activities:

Indicator Number	Indicator	Review Ranking
3.5	<i>Curriculum Design and Implementation of Instructional Programs</i> The school provides a comprehensive Montessori educational curriculum based on Montessori's fundamental philosophy of the	

	child and the Montessori planes of development, with clearly defined learner outcomes. (See “AMS Montessori Program Characteristics Papers” in the <i>School Accreditation Handbook</i> .)	
3.5.1	<p><i>Infant and Toddler (Birth — 3)</i></p> <p>The Infant & Toddler curriculum is based on 6 integrated developmental areas: sensory and perceptual, cognitive, physical, gross and fine motor, self-help skills, and social/emotional development. The learning environment fosters freedom of movement, integrates daily routines, and provides experiences that develop a child’s growth and independence.</p> <p>Indicators of successful implementation include students engaging in daily activities based on their needs, capabilities, and interests.</p>	
3.5.2	<p><i>Early Childhood (2.5 — 6)</i></p> <p>The Early Childhood curriculum integrates the core areas of Practical Life, Sensorial, Math, Language, Peace and Cosmic Education, and Cultural Subjects. The learning environment is student-centered and self-directed. It promotes the development of order, coordination, concentration, and independence. Indicators of successful implementation include students engaging in self-directed learning and completing cycles of work independently.</p>	
3.5.3	<p><i>Elementary I (6 — 9) and Elementary II (9 — 12)</i></p> <p>The Elementary curriculum integrates the core subjects of Mathematics (including geometry and algebra), Biological and Physical Sciences, Technology, Language Arts and Literature, History, Physical and Political World Geography, Civics, Economics, Anthropology, Peace and Cosmic Education, Art, Music, Additional/World Language, and Physical Education. Individually paced academic progress allows students to explore their interests and acquire the mastery of basic skills and knowledge. The learning environment is student- centered and designed to promote the development of organizational and time management skills, conflict resolution skills, concentration, independence, cooperation, and collaboration.</p> <p>Indicators of successful implementation include teacher guidance, assessment in planning in concert with student planning, monitoring, and assessing their own work, and demonstrating responsibility for their own learning and actions.</p>	
3.5.4	<p><i>Secondary I (12 14/15) and Secondary II (14/15 18)</i></p> <p>In addition to the core curriculum areas of Math, Language Arts, Social Studies, Science, Additional/World Language, and Creative Arts, the Secondary curriculum includes opportunities for community service, career exploration, economic awareness, technology, peace and cosmic education, physical education, outdoor education, and field studies. The curriculum prepares students for post-secondary education or careers through self-construction, extensive self-reflection, and opportunities for</p>	

	<p>leadership and personal responsibility. Personality integration and stewardship of the Earth and humanity are crucial elements of the curriculum. Students' independent decision-making, problem solving, community building, and application of learning indicate successful implementation of the curriculum.</p>	
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Indicators 3.6 – 3.8 / Criteria: Montessori Learning Activities:

Indicator Number	Indicator	Review Ranking
3.6	The school publishes and follows a written scope and sequence, across all program levels within the school, which is communicated to all constituencies.	
3.7	The school provides uninterrupted work periods of a length appropriate to the age of students served, to support student learning. (See “The Montessori Uninterrupted Work Period” in the <i>School Accreditation Handbook</i> .)	
3.7.1	Infant & Toddler: The school allocates and protects, at minimum, a daily 2-hour work cycle. The time block allows for adult-assisted mealtime, snacks, hygiene, and nap/rest routines.	
3.7.2	Early Childhood: The school allocates and protects, at minimum, a 2-hour work cycle, 4 days per week. A 3-hour uninterrupted work cycle, 5 days per week is optimal.	
3.7.3	Elementary: The school allocates and protects, at minimum, a 2-hour work cycle, 4 days per week. A 3-hour uninterrupted work cycle, 5 days per week is optimal.	
3.7.4	Secondary: The school allocates and protects, at minimum, a 2-hour work cycle for core curricular subjects (math, English, history or humanities, sciences, and additional world language/s).	
3.8	The school does not schedule enrichment programs, group snack, whole-group lessons, recess, and transition times during uninterrupted blocks of student work time.	

Indicators 3.9 – 3.11 / Criteria: Montessori Spirituality – The quality Montessori school

Indicator Number	Indicator	Review Ranking
3.9	Implements a curriculum that encourages the realization of Montessori’s vision of a peaceful world.	
3.10	Creates and follows policies that speak to the social and emotional health of the students.	
3.11	Engages students in environmental stewardship and sustainability activities to foster Montessori’s vision of maintaining the planet.	

Indicators 3.12 – 3.13 / Criteria: What the Montessori teacher is – The Montessori teacher is.....

Indicator Number	Indicator	Review Ranking
3.12	One who demonstrates knowledge and internalization of the core beliefs of Montessori philosophy, such as respect for the individual learner; preparation of self and the environment; fostering independence, order and concentration in the student; respect for and recognition of sensitive periods, planes of development, intrinsic motivation of the student, and the absorbent mind.	
3.13	One who demonstrates fundamental communication skills to support the social and emotional development of students and to communicate.	

Indicators 3.14 – 3.22 / Criteria: What the Montessori teacher does – The Montessori teacher

Indicator Number	Indicator	Review Ranking
3.14	Designs and uses instructional strategies, innovations, and activities that are observation and research-based, meet student needs, and reflect Montessori best practice.	
3.15	Promotes active involvement of students in the learning process.	
3.16	Provides for a balance of uninterrupted, self-directed, self-teaching, and collaborative activities with the presentation of individual, small-, and large-group lessons.	
3.17	Implements and keeps clear, written records of individual, small-, and large-group lessons and activities and uses a comprehensive record keeping system that accurately reflects each student’s development.	

3.18	Observes the overall classroom environment during individual lessons and records observations.	
3.19	Supports students in assessing their work as developmentally appropriate.	
3.20	Uses various methods of communication to discuss student development with parents.	
3.21	Implements accommodations and interventions to help students meet expectations for student learning, in consultation with school administrators and parents.	
3.22	Recognizes and provides opportunity	

STANDARD 4: DOCUMENTING AND USING RESULTS (Learner Outcomes)

The quality Montessori school enacts an ongoing assessment system that monitors and documents learner outcomes and uses these results to improve educational effectiveness.

Indicators 4.1 – 4.6 / Criteria: In a quality Montessori school, the administrative leader, faculty, and staff collaboratively...

Indicator Number	Indicator	Review Ranking
4.1	Determine written benchmarks across all program levels that indicate progress toward the following learner outcomes: academic preparation, autonomy and independence, confidence and competence, global citizenship, intrinsic motivation, social responsibility, and spiritual awareness/cosmic education.	
4.2	Create, publish, and implement a data-driven system including qualitative (rubric-based) and quantitative measures (as appropriate to the age level) to assess student progress toward the established learner outcomes.	
4.3	Analyze this recorded data, action research, and classroom observations to examine each student's physical, social-emotional, and cognitive development.	
4.4	Use the analysis of this data to make curricular and instructional decisions for individual students.	
4.5	Evaluate school-wide effectiveness in meeting established benchmarks using compiled student data.	
4.6	Use the results of a systematic analysis of instruction.	

STANDARD 5: PERSONNEL

The quality Montessori school has policies and practices in place to ensure that employees are well qualified and are assigned professional responsibilities based on their qualifications (i.e., professional preparation, ability, knowledge, and experience). Employees are provided support through ongoing evaluation and professional development and are sufficient in number to support the school’s mission and vision. The school states and follows fair, ethical, and non-discriminatory employment practices.

Indicators 5.1 – 5.15 / Criteria: The quality Montessori school...

Indicator Number	Indicator	Review Ranking
5.1	<p>Employs an administrative leader who has professional qualifications that meet state and local regulations, as applicable.</p> <p><i>*Emerging criterion effective July 1, 2020: Administrative leader (head of school/principal/executive director) holds a bachelor’s degree and qualifies with the minimum number of points required in the Head of School Requirements Verification, or has an approved portfolio variance.</i></p>	
5.2	<p>Employs lead teachers* who hold a credential for the level they are teaching issued by an AMS, NCME, or AMI teacher education program, or any other MACTE-accredited course (or who are enrolled and in good standing in a qualifying Montessori teacher education program) and qualify with the minimum number of points required in the Teacher Requirements Verification form. In addition, lead teachers must meet all applicable requirements of the state or territory in which they teach.</p> <p><i>*Emerging criterion effective July 1, 2020: Instructors of the core subjects of math, English, history or humanities, and sciences, who work with students ages 12 – 18, will be required to have the appropriate, qualifying Montessori credential, i.e., Secondary I or I-II.</i></p>	
5.3	<p>Employs Elementary and Secondary lead teachers who hold a minimum of a bachelor’s degree from a regionally accredited college/university in the U.S., a degree that is deemed to be equivalent, or one that meets the nationally recognized post-secondary educational standard in the state, province, or country of issuance as determined by a recognized U.S. credentialing agency (i.e., a credentialing agency that is a member of National Association of Credential Evaluation Services).</p>	
5.4	<p>Provides written employment agreements for all school personnel annually, including compensation, benefits, and terms of employment.</p>	

5.5	Follows a written school-wide faculty salary scale that recognizes credentialing, education, and years of service.	
5.6	Provides written job descriptions for all positions within the school.	
5.7	Provides an employee handbook that includes, but is not limited to, the following: AMS code of ethics, an organizational chart, a non-discrimination policy, an anti-harassment statement (including sexual harassment), a discipline policy, description of employee conduct expectations, a grievance procedure, and a policy and procedure for termination.	
5.8	Engages in annual staff training on written policies and procedures in employment handbook, including non-discrimination and anti-harassment policies.	
5.9	Ensures that all administrative and teaching staff document plans for completion of a minimum of ten (10) hours per year of professional development, which includes a minimum of one (1) hour of continuing professional development per year regarding the education of students with disabilities.	
5.10	Ensures that all non-credentialed employees receive an orientation to Montessori philosophy and practice.	
5.11	Ensures that the head of school and 100% of credentialed lead teachers maintain active membership in the American Montessori Society.	
5.12	Implements an annual evaluation system that sets goals for professional growth for all teaching and administrative personnel.	
5.13	Provides dedicated planning time for lead teachers on a weekly basis.	
5.14	Maintains ratios of students to adults as appropriate for the age level: Infants (Birth 18 months): 4:1 Toddler (15 36 months): 8:1 Early Childhood (2.5 6 years): 15:1 Elementary (ages 6 12 years): 20:1 Secondary I (ages 12 14/15 years): 20:1 Secondary II (ages 14 18) 25:1	
5.15	Assigns at least one Montessori credentialed lead teacher at the age level to meet the following maximum student/adult ratios: Infants (Birth 18 months): 10:1 Toddler (15 36 months): 16:1 Early Childhood (2.5 6 years): 30:1 Elementary (ages 6 12 years): 30:1 Secondary I (ages 12 14/15 years): 50:1* Secondary II (ages 14 18) 100:1*	

	<i>*In Secondary programs that utilize a departmental model in which credentialed lead teachers teach multiple sections of a core subject (math, English, history or humanities, sciences, and additional world languages), each lead teacher shall have a total student caseload no higher than stated above.</i>	
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STANDARD 6: FACILITY RESOURCES

The quality Montessori school provides facilities, sites, and equipment that meet optimum health and safety standards conducive to a safe learning environment in alignment with the mission of the school.

Indicators 6.1 – 6.6 / Criteria: The quality Montessori school:

Indicator Number	Indicator	Review Ranking
6.1	Certifies that the facilities meet all applicable federal, state, and local laws, standards, and regulations including, but not limited to, building codes and safety standards as required by local and civil authorities and the Americans with Disabilities Act.	
6.2	Provides and maintains a site, facilities, services, equipment, and furnishings to ensure a safe environment for all occupants. Evidence of mandated safety protocols are provided in the form of completed health, fire, playground and/or other inspections.	
6.3	Provides and maintains a site, facilities, services, equipment, and furnishings that support the school’s instructional and co-curricular programs, which includes consideration of light, ventilation, and temperature.	
6.4	Has written policies for the access to and use of the school site and facilities by individuals or groups outside of school hours with provision for adequate legal protections.	
6.5	Has facilities that are adequate for developmentally appropriate gross motor activity including space for safe, vigorous physical activity.	
6.6	Has accessible, neat storage for teacher materials.	

STANDARD 7: FINANCES & STABILITY

The quality Montessori school maintains strong and prudent financial management practices and adequate fiscal resources to support its mission and vision.

Indicators 7.1 – 7.8 / Criteria: The quality Montessori school...

Indicator Number	Indicator	Review Ranking
7.1	<p>Complies with all federal, state, and local regulations, as required by the school's legal status, and is verified by the AMS Independent Accounting Questionnaire.</p> <p><i>*It is the school's responsibility to be aware of all these laws and regulations and to take steps to be and remain in compliance. It is not the responsibility of AMS or the Visiting Team to independently verify compliance. Accreditation by AMS is not certification of a school's compliance with applicable laws and regulations.</i></p>	
7.2	<p>Monitors all financial practices and transactions by engaging an external accounting firm or certified individual annually to review and report on the school's financial practices and financial status through one of these recognized accounting services: review, compilation, or audit.</p>	
7.3	<p>Develops an annual operating budget that is approved by the governing body or owner.</p>	
7.4	<p>Utilizes a system for accurately tracking and documenting revenue and expenses.</p>	
7.5	<p>Reports on current year financial performance through the preparation of financial statements on a monthly or quarterly basis to the governing body or owner for oversight.</p>	
7.6	<p>Clearly states and publishes financial responsibilities of parents (if applicable).</p>	
7.7	<p>Maintains a written policy for managing, disbursing, and overseeing the allocation of funds awarded through its financial assistance program (if applicable).</p>	
7.8	<p>Engages in financial planning for the long-term sustainability of the school.</p>	

STANDARD 8: RECORDS, RESOURCES, AND SUPPORT SYSTEMS

The quality Montessori school has appropriate documentation, training, and human resources to meet applicable federal, state, and local regulations, assure health and safety of faculty/staff and students, and enable all students to achieve expectations for student learning.

Indicators 8.1 – 8.13 / Criteria: The quality Montessori school...

Indicator Number	Indicator	Review Ranking
8.1	Develops and implements a published comprehensive health (physical and emotional) and safety plan, preventive/emergency preparedness plan, and crisis management plan.	
8.2	Annually reviews, updates as needed, and shares with appropriate stakeholders the comprehensive health and safety plan, preventive/emergency preparedness plan, and crisis management plan. (Plans should reflect the date of the most recent review and/or revision.)	
8.3	Ensures that staff are trained, as required by local and state authorities, to comply with all current local and state safety regulations, including provisions made to simulate events and practice the execution of health and safety policies and procedures.	
8.4	Maintains records of scheduled, completed emergency drills.	
8.5	Documents and reports student incident/accidents that occur during school hours.	
8.6	Maintains insurance coverage: fire and extended coverage, comprehensive liability, workers' compensation, and director and officers' liability Insurance (if applicable).	
8.7	Creates and publishes policies and procedures for field trips and off-site events that provide for the safety of the students including proper chaperoning and procedures for use of commercial and/or private vehicle transportation.	
8.8	Maintains and distributes to staff students' emergency, health, and academic records at the site of attendance:	
8.8.1	Ensures that all teachers, administrators, and appropriate staff members shall receive any and all necessary information about a student's disability-related needs, which may include a copy of a student's specialized education program, to ensure that disability-	

	based accommodations and specialized instruction occur consistently throughout the student's day.	
8.8.2	Provides a plan regarding retention of student records upon closing of the school that abides by state or local regulations.	
8.9	Maintains on file and provides to families of students with disabilities, as necessary or requested, a list of professional support services and agencies in the community that are able to assist students with disabilities and families of students with disabilities.	
8.10	Assists families in establishing connections with agencies, programs, and/or community resources that may be beneficial to the students with disabilities and/or their families.	
8.11	Maintains employee records including Montessori credentials, licenses, teaching certificates, transcripts, evaluations, and background checks.	
8.12	Has a policy for maintaining and backing up student, former student, and employee records and business files in accordance with all applicable federal, state, and local laws.	
8.13	Ensures accessibility to all legal documents as required by federal state and local laws/regulations befitting the school's legal status.	

STANDARD 9: STAKEHOLDER COMMUNICATION AND RELATIONSHIPS

The quality Montessori school fosters effective communications and relationships with and among its stakeholders.

Indicators 9.1 – 9.9 / Criteria: The quality Montessori school...

Indicator Number	Indicator	Review Ranking
9.1	Has formal channels described and outlined in a policy and procedures document to listen to and communicate with stakeholders.	
9.2	Publishes a parent handbook that articulates policies and procedures relevant for students and families, including an anti-bullying statement, a student discipline policy, and a grievance procedure.	

9.3	Solicits the knowledge and skills of stakeholders to enhance the work of the school.	
9.4	Communicates, through multiple channels, the expectations for student learning, learner outcomes, school effectiveness, and goals for improvement to all stakeholders.	
9.5	Provides the necessary tools that enable outreach and engagement to the school's families, including those whose first language is one other than the primary language spoken in the school.	
9.6	Conducts annual assessments of school effectiveness with constituents and analyzes and shares results.	
9.7	Develops a written observation policy and encourages visits by parents and other community members.	
9.8	Practices community engagement by providing information about school programs and seeks ways to contribute locally.	
9.9	Provides family support and enrichment opportunities such as workshops on Montessori philosophy and curriculum, parenting issues, child development, and health and safety issues.	